United Nations TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/4

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Distr.: General
3 February 2014

Original: English

Trade and Development Board
Trade and Development Commission
Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development
Second session
Geneva, 15–17 April 2014
Item 2 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Provisional agenda and annotations

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Services, development and trade: The regulatory and institutional dimension
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

GE.14-50108
1450108

Please recycle

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1
Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the expert meeting elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2
Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda for the expert meeting is reproduced in chapter I, above. The expert meeting will have three days to complete its work (15–17 April 20014). A detailed programme will be available at the latest one week before the start of the meeting.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/4	Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3
Trade, services and development: The regulatory and institutional dimension

3. The multi-year expert meeting is held in accordance with the decision of the Trade and Development Board at its fifty-sixth executive session on 3–4 December 2012. It will build upon the previous multi-year expert meetings on regulatory and institutional dimensions in the development of the services sector, including infrastructure services sectors, as well as the first session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development (25–26 February 2013). The objective of the expert meeting is to identify best-fit practices at the levels of policymaking, regulations, institutions and trade negotiations that link services, development and trade in a balanced manner, including a strengthening of national services regulation. This objective will be pursued through an exchange of experiences and lessons learned so as to assist developing countries, particularly least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, to establish and strengthen regulatory and institutional frameworks and cooperative mechanisms with a view to enhancing their services supply and trade capacity, and the efficiency and competitiveness of the services sector.

4. Encompassing transport, telecommunications, energy and financial services, infrastructure services sectors constitute the backbone of the economy in all countries and contribute directly and indirectly to growth, income generation and higher welfare. Infrastructure services sectors also assume an important social function as access to basic services (including electricity, gas and safe drinking water), financial inclusion and bridging of the digital divide are catalytic to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals as well as future post-2015 sustainable development goals. Weak infrastructure services sectors often hamper the development of other service sectors, including tourism, distribution (wholesale, retail, and the like), information and communications technology services, and business and professional services, especially in least developed countries and small and vulnerable economies. For infrastructure services to contribute successfully to the economic and social development of a country, the legal and regulatory environment must be supportive. Accordingly, the regulatory and institutional framework of infrastructural services is becoming increasingly crucial to inclusive and sustainable development.

5. Building on the discussions undertaken and the recommendations made during the past multi-year expert meetings between 2009–2012, and the first session of the current

multi-year expert meeting, this session will seek to examine services sectors' regulatory and institutional frameworks and liberalization at the regional level, and how parties to regional trade agreements negotiate joint infrastructure services provisions and regulations (for example, energy, transport and financial services; services relating to information and communications technologies, as well as the interface between trade agreements and the domestic regulation of services, including infrastructure services and professional services). Another important issue is how to achieve developmental regionalism combining market access with cooperation frameworks, inter alia, to build productive capacity.

6. To facilitate discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared an issues note, "Services, development and trade: The regulatory and institutional dimension". In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare case studies on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/5	Services, development and trade: The regulatory and institutional dimension

Item 4
Adoption of the report of the meeting

7. The report of the expert meeting will be submitted to the Trade and Development Commission at its next session. The expert meeting may wish to authorize the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

Input from experts

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (of between 5 and 12 pages) as contributions to the work of the meeting. The papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received. They should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting, and addressed to:

Ms. Mina Mashayekhi, Office E.8032
or
Mr. Aurangzeb Butt, Office E.8038
UNCTAD
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 917 5866 or +41 22 917 5640
Fax.: +41 22 917 0044
E-mail: mina.mashayekhi@unctad.org or aurangzeb.butt@unctad.org